# Ecological Status of Lake Okeechobee in April 2003

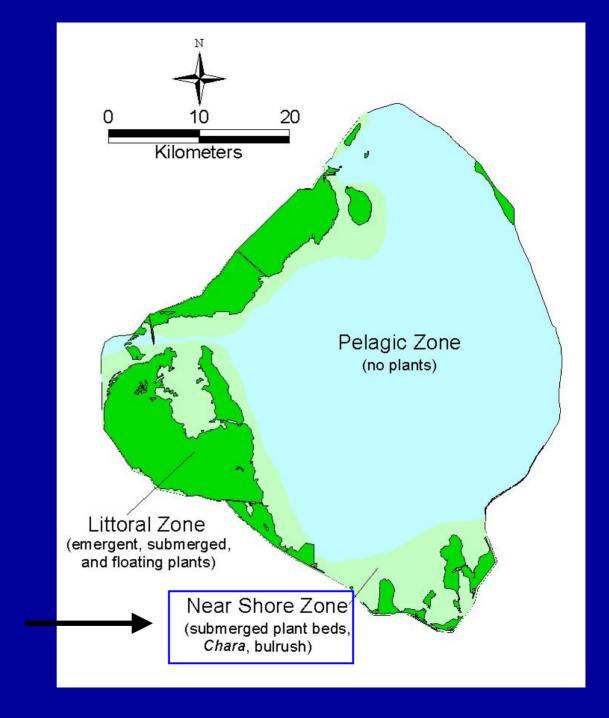


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# **Key Indicators of Lake Health that are Relevant at this Time:**

- Sustained high water level
- Status of spring recession
- Status of submerged vegetation
- Water clarity in shoreline areas



Focal Point for Health Indicators

## Status of Water Level Indicators

 Moderate high stage – not to exceed 15 ft for longer than 6 months. Status = yellow = moderate probability of adverse ecological impacts

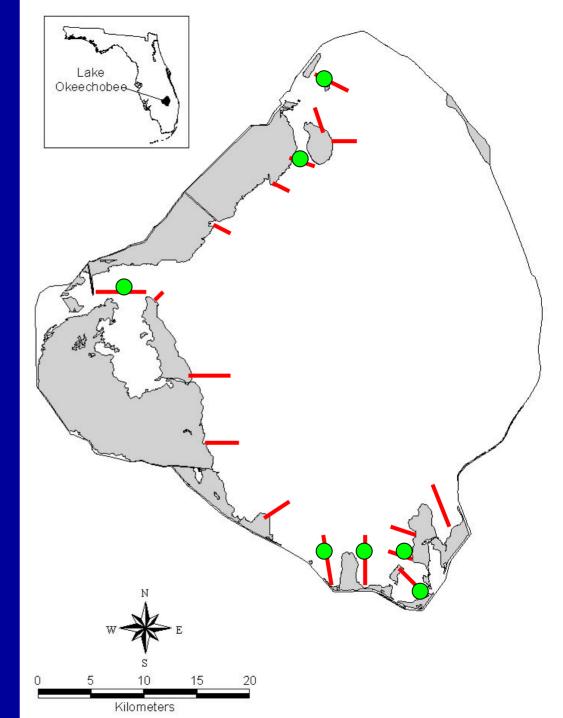
 Spring recession – gradual decline from winter maximum to near 13.5 ft in June.
 Status = to be determined.

# Vegetation Indicator (survey methods)

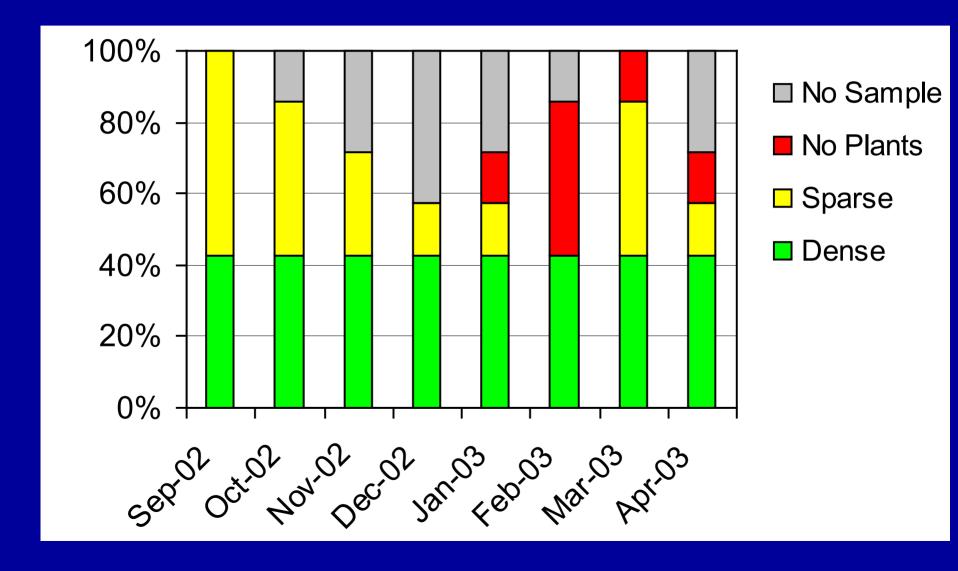
- Yearly lake-wide mapping → total acres of plants, over 500 stations (supports CERP Report Card)
- Quarterly transect sampling → seasonal variation in plants at 50 stations (supports operational planning)
- Monthly sampling 

  7 sentinel stations (supports real-time lake operations)

Quarterly transects (red lines) with monthly sentinel stations (green dots)



#### **Current Information from Sentinel Stations**



## Peppergrass in Bay Bottom with clear water



### Approximately one mile to the north, with turbid water:



## West of King's Bar, with turbid / colored water:

